

Executive Summary of the Draft Irvington 2002 Comprehensive Plan

Comprehensive Plans provide guidance and recommend the implementation of strategies for a community's future development. As defined in NYS Planning and Zoning Law, a village comprehensive plan is a means to guide "the immediate and long-range protection, enhancement, growth and development of the Village." The comprehensive planning process involves a variety of research and assessment tasks: review of past plans and objectives, examination of historical trends and current conditions, identification of issues of concern, and formulation of recommendations for existing issues and future opportunities.

An important part of a comprehensive plan is the definition of an overarching "vision" for the community, an articulation of a community's identity and how it should be shaped for the future. The vision for the 2002 Comprehensive Plan is grounded in the mandate given to the Land Use Committee by the Board of Trustees, to examine recommendations for land use and growth management initiatives that would preserve the Village's built character and open space qualities. This mandate, can be distilled into four main goals:

1. *Preserving and enhancing the Village's existing built character and scale.*
2. *Protecting the health, safety and quality of life of Village residents.*
3. *Controlling and managing growth in the Village.*
4. *Protecting and enhancing the Village's green spaces, natural resources, open space areas and scenic corridors.*

To realize these goals, the Plan focuses on four major policy areas: land use and development controls; transportation; open space and parks; and the Main Street area and the waterfront. Over the course of the 12-month comprehensive planning process, research was conducted to identify issues and develop recommendations pertaining to these policy areas. Input was also provided by Irvington residents during the November 13, 2001 public workshop, during which residents offered insight into Irvington's key strengths and issues and commented on possible recommendations for issues such as open space preservation, senior and affordable housing, preserving the historic character of the Main Street area, and addressing the development potential on the larger undeveloped parcels in the Village.

The Comprehensive Plan incorporates the research and public input obtained during the planning process. Each of the policy areas is addressed in a separate chapter of the plan, which details existing conditions, current issues, and recommendations for achieving the Village's goals. Together, these recommendations set forth a guide for Irvington's future growth and development.

The major objectives and recommendations for each policy area are summarized below.

Land Use and Development Controls

Policy Objective. Preservation of Irvington's built character – its density, scale and historic character – and its natural and scenic resources are key Village goals. Existing Village zoning and subdivision ordinances should be updated to ensure that future development is in concert with these public goals.

Recommendations:

- Consider amending the Zoning Code's cluster provision to increase the flexibility and open space mechanisms contained in the ordinance.
- Address potential infill housing development by considering residential floor area ratio (FAR) regulations and by exploring the use of open space ratios. Review existing Zoning Code regulations governing flag lots, and if necessary, amend Code to prohibit such lots.

- Encourage Senior or Affordable Housing using the Village's special permit mechanism. This existing below-market-rate housing provision should be amended to permit affordable housing in a range of zoning districts. The Village should encourage developers to include a specified number or percentage of affordable units in new housing development.
- Protect the scenic qualities of Broadway and the Old Croton Aqueduct by requiring a deeper, landscaped buffer for all new lots created through subdivision of property.
- Preserve the historic ambiance of the Village by creating a historic district and landmarks ordinance and designating the Main Street area as a historic district, as well as by amending the Subdivision Ordinance to require protection and mapping of stone walls throughout Village.
- Review existing protections provided by the Resource Protection Ordinance (Article XV) for environmental and natural features such as wetlands and watercourses; review the need to enact a wetlands/watercourses ordinance and explore additional ordinances such as ridgeline development and erosion and sediment controls.
- Create a parks and recreation zone for the Village's major public and private recreation areas, such as the Ardsley Country Club and the Village-owned land surrounding the Reservoir.
- Rezone the southwest portion of the Village and Matthiessen Park to require a minimum lot size of 2.0 acres per lot, to preserve open space and density patterns.

Transportation

Policy Objective. Irvington's transportation network – its roads, pedestrian networks, as well as the regional mass transit system – is an integral part of the Village's character. The recommendations set forth in this Plan seek to ensure safe and efficient traffic circulation, preserve the character of local roads, and enhance pedestrian and bicycle networks in the Village.

Recommendations (All recommendations are proposed for future study).

- Update Village official maps to show dedicated public thoroughfares and de-map paper roads that do not forward Village goals.
- Improve traffic operating conditions and safety conditions for vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians in problematic areas, including but not limited to the following:
 1. Working with state officials to lower the speed limit along Broadway.
 2. Studying the feasibility of improving the Dow's Lane corridor.
 3. Requiring the construction of sidewalks on new roads, where appropriate.
 4. Posting and enforcing the new dirt-bike/all-terrain-vehicle ordinance.
- Improve pedestrian access to the waterfront and to the open spaces areas in the eastern portion of the Village.
- Extend the network of bicycle-friendly trails and place bike racks at high-traffic locations.
- Update Village Codes to classify Village thoroughfares based on function, jurisdiction, use, type and level of design/construction.
- Update Village Codes to prescribe what constitutes a significant adverse impact to traffic operating conditions at a specific location, based on the 2000 Highway Capacity Manual.

- Evaluate the feasibility of implementing the following amendments to Village Codes to better address safety for drivers, cyclists and pedestrians and to limit the permitted additional volume of traffic caused by new development in the Village along local roads:
 1. Setting threshold levels above which a traffic study must be performed for new developments.
 2. Prohibiting developments which will be a primary generator of commercial traffic over residential thoroughfares.
 3. Prohibiting the construction of roads or driveways connecting to limited access thoroughfares.
 4. Limiting the additional volume of traffic that a development may add to:
 - a. connector or arterial roads that do not have a sidewalk.
 - b. high accident locations
 - c. narrow or unpaved thoroughfares
 - d. other local thoroughfares.
 5. Requiring a developer to seek approval from the Board of Trustees to change the classification of a Village thoroughfare; and
Requiring development fees to establish local mass transit services and improve, enhance and expand pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

Open Space and Parks

Policy Objective. Irvington's existing open space, natural and scenic resources provide environmental and aesthetic benefits to Village residents, and are part of a larger, regional open space network. Measures should be developed to improve access to designated parks and recreation areas and further protect natural resources, open space areas and scenic corridors.

Recommendations.

- Consider enacting a cluster ordinance that will enable the preservation of open space and natural resources on parcels being developed for residential uses.
- Explore additional opportunities to purchase areas with significant natural or open space resources using Village bond money or through the application of public and private funds.
- Enhance the scenic corridors along Broadway and the Old Croton Aqueduct Trail by implementing landscaping requirements for developed properties and deepening the buffer requirement on properties that can be developed in the future.
- Improve trail links between open space areas by formally designating and mapping trails and providing additional parking at trail entrances and Village parks. Link the Village trails to the regional trail network along the waterfront and in the eastern portion of the Village.
- Support efforts to maintain and preserve the Old Croton Aqueduct Trail.
- Update Village list of dedicated parkland, adopted in February 1989, to include Village-owned property in eastern portion of the Village
- Locate a suitable site or sites for additional Village recreation fields.
- Preserve the open space character by continuing to publicize and encourage the use of conservation easements of private property.

Main Street Area and the Waterfront

Policy Objective. The Main Street area and the waterfront are destination areas for Village residents, serving as the center of commercial and municipal activity. Each has a historic character and scale that contribute to the charm and identity of the Village. This scale and built character should be preserved, and access to the waterfront improved, to create a more cohesive center.

Recommendations.

- Preserve the historic character of the Main Street and waterfront areas by designating them as historic districts.
- Protect the built scale of the Main Street area by exploring a zoning amendment to restrict possible large-scale retail development.
- Preserve the Main Street view of the Hudson River by designating it a scenic viewshed; develop provisions to address obstacles and intrusions on the viewshed.
- Encourage additional mixed-use opportunities along South Astor Street, specifically at the Department of Public Works site and the Trent Building.
- Continue exploring methods to improve safety and traffic flow on Main Street.

Explore opportunities to improve pedestrian access to the waterfront, such as by designating a pedestrian pathway along the road to the Scenic Hudson Park, by creating a streetscape along West Main Street, and by constructing a second pedestrian overpass to the west side of the railroad tracks, south of the Main Street area, as listed on the Governor's Task Force on Access to the Estuary. A second vehicular access point, to accommodate emergency vehicles and improve access to waterfront areas, should also be considered.

BE IN THE KNOW, AND BE HEARD REGARDING IRVINGTON'S FUTURE

The Village Draft Comprehensive (Master) Plan is being considered for adoption by the Board of Trustees. The Plan when adopted will serve as a visionary policy guide for the future growth and development of our Village.

REVIEW THE PROPOSED PLAN (EXECUTIVE SUMMARY HERE - ENTIRE PLAN AVAILABLE AT LIBRARY, VILLAGE HALL AND WEBSITE <http://village.irvington.ny.us>).

Then...

COMMENT AT THE PUBLIC HEARING ON MONDAY OCTOBER 21, 2002, IN THE PROGRAM ROOM OF THE IRVINGTON PUBLIC LIBRARY BEGINNING AT 7:30 P.M.